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Making sense of the world



# THE WEEK

## Junior

THE BEST  
MAGAZINE FOR  
CURIOUS  
KIDS

# LUNAR NEW YEAR

It's the Year of the Snake! Find out  
how you can celebrate **p24**







# This week's big news



## RARE EVENT

Donald Trump and Grover Cleveland are the only US Presidents to serve two terms that were not consecutive.

President Donald Trump (left) takes the oath of office with his wife, Melania, next to him.

## A snowy inauguration



Until 1933, inaugurations were held on March 4. On that date in 1909, President William H. Taft (above) was sworn in. Although it was nearly spring, the day brought what's been called the worst inauguration weather ever, including wind so strong it toppled trees and utility poles. Nearly 10 inches of snow fell, an inaugural record.

# New President takes office

On January 20, Donald Trump was sworn in as the nation's 47th President in a ceremony in Washington, DC. The inauguration marked the transfer of power from former President Joe Biden to Trump, who also served as the 45th President.

## What is the inauguration?

The inauguration is a formal ceremony to officially mark the start of a President's four-year term. At the ceremony, the incoming President and Vice President swear an oath to uphold and defend the US Constitution (nation's highest law). The Constitution calls for the inauguration to take place at noon on January 20. Although the ceremony usually happens on the steps of the US Capitol, it was held inside the building in a room called the Rotunda this year due to cold temperatures of about 27° F. The last time the US had an indoor inauguration was at the start of Ronald Reagan's second term in 1985, when temperatures fell to 7° F.

## What happened at the event?

As about 600 people looked on, Vice President JD Vance was sworn in first, by US Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. Next, Trump was sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts. Trump was joined onstage by his wife, Melania, and

his five children. Trump then gave a speech laying out the goals for his term. Biden attended the ceremony, along with the three other living former Presidents: Barack Obama, George W. Bush, and Bill Clinton. Outgoing Vice President Kamala Harris, Trump's opponent for the Presidency, and leaders of the US Congress (the branch of government that makes laws) were also there.

## What else happened?

After the inauguration, Biden and former First Lady Jill Biden left the Capitol in a helicopter. An inaugural parade through the city usually follows, but it was moved indoors to the Capital One Arena. At the arena, Trump signed several executive orders, then went to the White House to sign more.



Joe and Jill Biden before their departure

An executive order is a written instruction that is similar to a law. Although laws must be approved by Congress, the Constitution gives Presidents a limited ability to issue orders that require only their signature. Trump's orders covered a range of topics, including immigration and climate rules, and some of them reversed orders Biden had signed. Trump also issued pardons to about 1,500 people who were charged with crimes related to an attack on the US Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Later, Trump and his wife attended three inaugural parties. His family also moved into the White House, and Vance and his family moved into the Naval Observatory, where Vice Presidents live.

## How did people react?

Trump supporters who traveled to Washington for the event were enthusiastic. "I'm very excited about the next four years," Leslie Simek, who came from New York, told NBC News. People who do not support Trump also made their voices heard. On January 19, thousands of people attended the People's March in Washington, DC, to protest Trump's second term. "I'm really not happy with the way our country's voted," a woman named Brooke told BBC News. Before leaving Washington, Biden spoke to his supporters, saying, "It's been the honor of my life to serve as your President."

## What will happen next?

Every President nominates more than 20 people to serve in their cabinet (group of close advisers). Nominees must be confirmed by the Senate (one half of Congress) through a process that involves public hearings. Hearings for Trump's nominees have begun and will continue. Trump will also fill positions in the White House that do not require congressional approval. Meanwhile, civil rights groups and others have mounted legal challenges to some of Trump's executive orders.



## French sailor wins worldwide race

On January 14, French sailor Charlie Dalin won a sailing race called the Vendée Globe after more than two months at sea, beating the previous record by 10 days. Dalin, age 40, reached the endpoint of the race, off the coast of western France, in 64 days, 19 hours, and 22 minutes.

The Vendée Globe is a nonstop, around-the-world race held every four years. Sailors travel solo and cover 24,000 nautical miles (nearly 28,000 miles) across some of the world's toughest waters. The route takes them around South Africa's Cape of Good Hope, Australia's Cape Leeuwin, and South America's Cape Horn. Dalin was one of 40 sailors in the race. When *The Week Junior* went to press, 31 competitors had not yet reached the finish line.

In the 2020–2021 Vendée Globe, Dalin crossed the finish line first after 80 days, but Yannick Bestaven won after receiving a time bonus for helping to rescue a competitor. Dalin came in second place. This year's win was "the best finish line of my whole career," Dalin said. "I'm the happiest man in the world."



Charlie Dalin



One of the Israeli hostages (right) after being released by Hamas

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The Middle East is a region of Asia that covers more than 2.7 million square miles and has a population of more than 500 million.

## Ceasefire begins in Middle East

After 15 months of war, a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas (a terrorist group based in the Palestinian territory of Gaza) began on January 19. A ceasefire is an end to fighting.

The agreement has three phases. The first will last six weeks and include the release of 33 Israeli hostages who are being held by Hamas. Hamas is believed to have about 100 hostages. More than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners being held in Israeli jails will also be freed, and a flow of humanitarian aid will enter Gaza. Israel will begin to move its soldiers out of Gaza, and Palestinians who fled northern Gaza will be allowed to return home.

On the first day, Hamas released three hostages, Israel released 90 prisoners, and 630 trucks carrying food, water, and supplies entered Gaza. Families of people being held on both sides

expressed relief. Daniel Lifshitz, whose grandfather is among the hostages set to be released in the first phase, told *The New York Times*, "The stomach is turning, and the heart is poured out on the floor, but it's what we've been waiting for," he said.

The ceasefire is significant because officials from the US, Egypt, and Qatar had tried for more than a year to work out an agreement between the two sides. The latest effort involved the administrations of outgoing US President Joe Biden and incoming President Donald Trump.

The second phase will also last six weeks, with the goal of a permanent end to fighting, full withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza, and the return of all remaining hostages in exchange for prisoners. The final stage, which could take years, would involve the rebuilding of Gaza.



## IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

### A SNAKE STAMP

The US Postal Service (USPS) released a new stamp in honor of Lunar New Year, which begins on January 29. "It is our wish that the Year of the Snake brings each of you good health, great joy, and much prosperity," the USPS said. (For more on celebrating Lunar New Year, see page 24.)



The new stamp

### DINO DRESS-UP

It was a wild time when 468 people decked out as a T. rex, Triceratops, or other prehistoric creature took to the streets of West Palm Beach, Florida. They set a new world record for the largest gathering of people in dinosaur costumes, crushing the old record of 252 people. "WE DID IT!!!!," said the event's organizers.



A young dino

### CARING FOR OTHERS

Avery Colvert, age 14, started a donation drive to help teen girls who lost their homes in the California wildfires this month. Her group, Altadena Girls, went viral and has filled a warehouse with free clothing, haircare, makeup, and other supplies. Colvert said she wanted girls to "feel like themselves again."



Altadena Girls volunteers





# National news



TikTok, founded in 2017, has about 2 billion users worldwide.

**TECH MILESTONE**  
Friendster, one of the first social media platforms to allow users to share content, was launched in 2002.

## Meta stops fact-checking



Meta, the owner of Facebook and Instagram, announced it will end its fact-checking program—which identifies misinformation—on its social media apps. It will instead use a “community notes” system so users can correct posts. Journalists said the move would make it harder for people to find accurate information online.

# Law to ban TikTok is uncertain

TikTok, the video-sharing app that is owned by the Chinese company ByteDance, became temporarily unavailable to its more than 170 million users in the US when a new law went into effect on January 19. The app returned to phones and devices later that day, but many legal experts said the app’s future is unclear.

## What is the law?

Last spring, Democrats and Republicans in Congress (branch of government that makes laws) came together to vote in favor of a bill that would ban TikTok in the US or force its sale to a US company. Many people, including then former President Donald Trump, were concerned that Chinese authorities could force ByteDance to hand over data about US users,

compromising US security. President Joe Biden signed the bill into law in April 2024, which mandated that ByteDance had until January 19, 2025, to sell TikTok to an American owner.

## How did ByteDance react?

ByteDance filed a legal dispute challenging the law, and the case was heard by the US Supreme Court (America’s most powerful court of law). On January 17, the court’s nine justices issued a unanimous (all in favor) opinion that the law was valid and could go into effect.

## What happened on January 19?

TikTok became unavailable about an hour before the ban went into effect. Trump, reversing course from his previous opposition

to TikTok, wrote on social media that when he became President he would try to keep TikTok available to Americans and delay the law from going into effect by 90 days. As a result, TikTok restored service to current users that day.

## What will happen next?

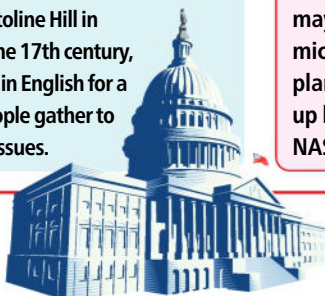
There is no known deal in place for the sale of the app. Although the law doesn’t force TikTok to stop its feed, it does require app stores to remove the app from their offerings. When *The Week Junior* went to press on January 21, TikTok was unavailable for new users to download from Apple and Google, although previous users could access their feeds. For the law to be repealed, Congress would have to pass a bill overturning it and Trump would need to sign it.



## WORD OF THE WEEK

### CAPITOL

The “Capitol” is the building in Washington, DC, where Congress meets to make laws. It is based on the Latin *Capitolium*, which was the name of a temple devoted to the god Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill in ancient Rome. By the 17th century, the word was used in English for a building where people gather to discuss important issues.



## THE WEEK IN HISTORY

### January 24, 2004

#### Opportunity rover lands on Mars

On January 24, 2004, the Opportunity rover landed on Mars, six months after it was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida. Once there, the rover learned that Mars may have once been able to sustain life for microorganisms. Opportunity’s mission was planned to last about 90 days, but it ended up lasting more than 5,300 days before NASA declared the mission over in 2019.



A rendering of Opportunity

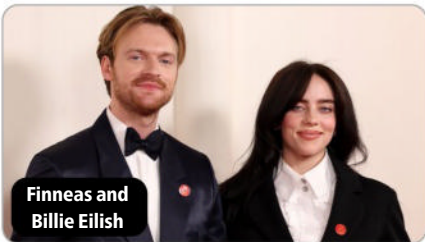




Suni Williams

## Astronaut conducts spacewalk

On January 16, NASA astronaut Suni Williams made her eighth career spacewalk and her first since arriving at the ISS in June 2024. She conducted repair work on a telescope. Williams, who became the station commander in September, and fellow astronaut Butch Wilmore arrived at the ISS last year for a one-week stay. Due to a malfunction in their capsule, their return was delayed. NASA said they will come back to Earth in March or April.



Finneas and Billie Eilish

## Benefit concert for fire relief set

More than 20 top artists—including Billie Eilish and Finneas, Gracie Abrams, and Jelly Roll—will perform at FireAid, a concert to benefit those affected by the wildfires in Los Angeles, California. The concert will be held at both the Intuit Dome and the Kia Forum in Los Angeles on January 30 and will also be broadcast live. Since January 7, the fires have burned more than 40,000 acres.



One of the chicks

## Zoo welcomes penguin chicks

Adventure Aquarium in Camden, New Jersey, announced the birth of two African penguin chicks. Both were hatched to first-time parents on December 1. Gabby, born to Taco and Bahari, was named for her talkative nature. Shubert, born to Hubert and Mushu, is exceeding his growth milestones. The species, native to the southwestern coast of Africa, is endangered in the wild due to habitat loss.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The FDA also regulates the safety of products consumed by animals, including pet food and medicine.



**Food producers will have to use other ingredients to make products look red.**

# Red Dye No. 3 removed from foods

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA, the US agency that monitors the safety of food and medicine) announced on January 15 that Red Dye No. 3, a chemical that gives food and beverages a bright red color, has been banned from the nation's food supply. The chemical is currently used in more than 9,200 products, including candy, baked goods, canned fruit, ice cream, flavored drinks, and gummy vitamins.

The dye, also known as erythrosine or FD&C Red No. 3, was first approved for use in 1907. Research conducted in the 1980s showed that it can cause cancer in laboratory rats. In 1990, the FDA banned the dye from being used in cosmetics and medicine applied directly to the skin. In 2022, scientists and consumer protection groups petitioned the FDA to ban the dye from food and medicine taken through the mouth.

The January 15 announcement is a response to that petition. In communicating its decision, the FDA said that although there is no evidence that Red Dye No. 3 causes cancer in people, it is

banning the chemical as a "matter of law" due to the link to cancer in animals.

Consumer advocates and many scientists applauded the announcement. The ban "removes an unnecessary hazard" and "should have occurred more than three decades ago," Peter Lurie, president of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, told NBC News.

Red Dye No. 3 is already banned or severely restricted in the European Union (EU, a group of 27 nations), Australia, and Japan.

California and 10 other US states have also passed laws to ban the dye from products sold there. In response, some US food companies—including Mars, the maker of M&M'S, and Just Born, the maker of Peeps—had already removed the chemical from their products.

Food producers will have until January 15, 2027, to stop using Red Dye No. 3, and drug manufacturers will have until January 18, 2028. In the meantime, experts said that people who want to consume less of the dye can check for it on product ingredient lists.



The Food and Drug Administration's logo

## THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

**"Escaped cow drops by Kansas State University campus" UPI**







# Around the world



## **England, United Kingdom** **Planting half a million trees**

The National Trust, a conservation organization, has teamed up with a UK government-funded program to plant 416,000 trees in England by the end of March. The project is planting varieties such as oak, elm, birch, and alder to create woodlands, orchards, hedges, and pastures on nearly 1,300 acres of land across 20 sites. The trees will benefit local wildlife, including harvest mice, butterflies, and 13 bat species.



## **Sofia, Bulgaria** **New national leader chosen**

On January 16, after months of negotiations, lawmakers in Bulgaria approved Rosen Zhelyazkov as the country's new prime minister. Nearly three months ago, the country held an election to decide on a new government. The GERB party won but didn't have enough seats in parliament (similar to Congress) to run the government on their own. Zhelyazkov, who is part of GERB, will work with other parties in a group known as a coalition.



## **Brasília, Brazil** **Smartphone restrictions in schools**

Starting in February, students in Brazil will no longer be allowed to use smartphones during the school day. Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva signed the new rules into law on January 13. He called the law—which allows exceptions to be made when using phones for educational purposes—an example of “working together for the safety and better learning of our children.”

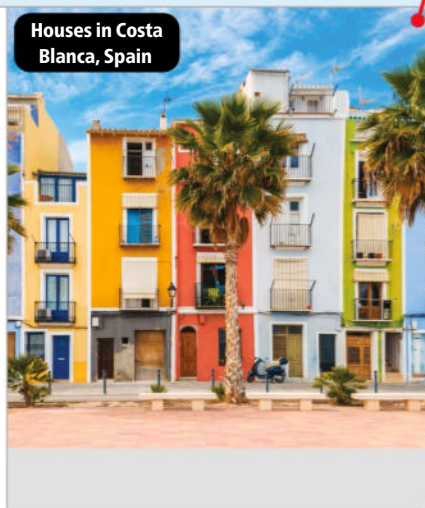
## **Chemnitz, Germany** **City kicks off special year**

Tens of thousands of people gathered in Chemnitz on January 18 to celebrate the beginning of its year as European Capital of Culture, a program to make people aware of lesser-known cities and boost tourism. While sharing the 2025 title with Nova Gorica in Slovenia, Chemnitz will host more than 1,000 events to showcase its culture.



## **Spain** **Tax to increase cost of buying houses**

People who are not residents of the European Union (EU, a group of 27 countries) might soon have to pay an unusually high tax on homes they purchase in Spain. The country is a popular destination for vacation homes, but it is facing a shortage of affordable housing for Spanish people. Under a new plan, foreign buyers will have to pay a tax to the government of up to 100% of the price of each home they purchase.



OWEN DOUGLAS JONES/NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES; ALAMY (2); REUTERS (2); COVER IMAGES; GETTY IMAGES (4)



# Around the world



The lawyers

## **Petushki, Vladimir, Russia** **Three lawyers found guilty**

Three lawyers who worked with Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny were jailed on January 17 for belonging to an "extremist organization." Navalny, a critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin, died in prison in February 2024. The lawyers were accused of passing messages from Navalny to the outside world while he was in jail.



Yoon Suk Yeol

## **Seoul, South Korea** **Suspended president arrested**

On January 15, South Korea's suspended president, Yoon Suk Yeol, was arrested. Yoon is facing a criminal trial because he tried to introduce martial law (military rule) on December 3 and sent soldiers to seize the country's National Assembly. On January 19, a court ruled that Yoon can be kept in jail while he awaits trial. Hundreds of his supporters then stormed into the court building, and about 90 of them were also arrested.



A sunfish at the aquarium

## **Shimonoseki, Japan** **Lonely sunfish gets comfort**

Staff at the Kaikyokan Aquarium say they have cheered up a sunfish that was missing human company. When the aquarium closed for renovations in December, the sunfish stopped eating its food and started rubbing against the sides of its tank. Staff began waving to the fish and taped photos of human faces to its tank, along with real clothes, to look like visitors. This seemed to cheer up the fish, which began eating again and waving its fins.



A Sydney beach being cleaned

## **Sydney, Australia** **Beach debris is tested**

For the second time in six months, balls of sewage have washed up on beaches in Sydney, forcing them to close. Authorities closed nine beaches on January 14 and collected the balls for testing. Results show that they contained fat and human waste. In October, thousands of bigger, darker balls appeared. Experts say both types of debris probably came from sewer systems.

## **Chiang Rai, Thailand** **Farmer creates rice art**

A Thai farmer has used his rice fields to make artwork in honor of people who were affected by floods in the area last September. Tanyapong Jaikham worked with 20 people to create the picture, which is nearly the size of four football fields, using different types of rice in various colors. His design shows a cat deity being held protectively by a dragon, symbolizing hope and resilience.



The rice art from above



# The big debate

## Should we bring back extinct species?

Some people say we can help animals and our planet, but others disagree.

### What you need to know

- A species becomes extinct when it disappears from Earth. Today, extinction happens mainly because of the actions of humans.
- When an animal goes extinct, its entire ecosystem changes. That can affect other species, the climate, and the land it lived on.
- Scientists are trying to revive extinct species like the woolly mammoth, which died out 4,000 years ago, and the dodo bird, which died out in the 1600s. This is called de-extinction.



An illustration of dodo birds

**DID YOU KNOW?**

More than 46,000 species around the world are currently facing the threat of extinction.

In 2003, science fiction became reality when scientists brought the Pyrenean ibex, an extinct species of mountain goat, back to life. Although the animal survived for only a short time, the feat was considered a success. People began to wonder—if de-extinction could happen for a goat, could it also work for other creatures? Could the woolly mammoth or Tasmanian tiger roam the Earth again? Scientists have been trying to find out, and while the idea sounds exciting, other experts wonder if it's the right thing to do. Would bringing long-gone animals back help the planet, or would it do more harm than good? What do you think? Should we bring back extinct species?

### Yes—we can reverse the damage

In 2023, at least 21 animals went extinct in the US, mainly due to human activity like deforestation and hunting. We caused them to disappear, so we should do all we can to bring them back. Animals that once helped their ecosystems could also help our environment. For example, when woolly mammoths stomped around, they packed down the frozen land and kept it cold. Without them, temperatures rose and ice began to melt. They could help us lower temperatures and fight climate change. And scientists working on de-extinction technology say that it can one day be used to help endangered species—before they die out.

### No—let's focus on living animals

It might be exciting to bring back extinct animals like the dodo bird, but that doesn't mean it would be good for the animal. Their natural habitat is long gone, and we don't know how to take care of them. What would they eat? Where would they live? There's also no guarantee that they would be good for our environment. The animals could harm existing ecosystems or carry diseases that affect other wildlife and people. If we really want to help, we should focus on stopping climate change, repairing the planet, and saving species that need conserving right now. Just because we can bring a species back doesn't mean we should.

**YES**

### Three reasons we should bring back extinct species

- 1 It would be a way to undo the damage we did by causing animals to go extinct.
- 2 Bringing back animals that helped their ecosystems could have a positive effect on our environment.
- 3 The technology could also work on endangered animals that may one day go extinct. We should use it to save them.

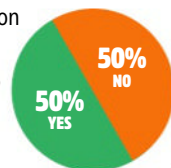
**NO**

### Three reasons we should not bring back extinct species

- 1 It's unfair to bring animals back if we can't make sure they have the right habitat and can live a healthy life.
- 2 The animals might not be helpful to our environment and could even cause harm.
- 3 It would be more helpful to focus our efforts on fighting climate change and saving the animals that are alive today.

### LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if it's OK to have a messy bedroom. In a rare tie, your votes were evenly split on whether it's best to keep your room neat or not.



### What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit [kids.theweekjunior.com/polls](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/polls) so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think we should bring back extinct species and **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

**The goal of the big debate** is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.





## Advocating for animals

**Bindi Irwin hopes to inspire young wildlife enthusiasts with a new book.**

Australian conservationist and TV personality Bindi Irwin, age 26, is passionate about protecting wildlife and educating others. In her debut children's book, *You Are a Wildlife Warrior!*, which will be released on February 4, she invites kids to explore the natural world and ways they can help protect it.

Irwin is carrying on the legacy of her conservationist parents: her mother Terri Irwin and father Steve Irwin, who was the beloved host of the nature documentary series *The Crocodile Hunter*

until his death in 2004. She grew up surrounded by animals at the Australia Zoo, which her family runs in Queensland, Australia. She frequently appeared on her father's show, and at age 8 she hosted her own series, *Bindi the Jungle Girl*. Irwin now manages the zoo alongside her family and leads global conservation efforts through

their nonprofit, Wildlife Warriors, which supports projects like anti-poaching initiatives for tigers in Indonesia and rhinoceros conservation in Kenya.

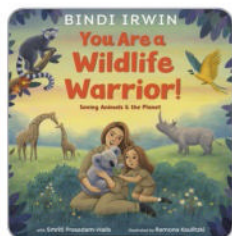
*You Are a Wildlife Warrior!* takes readers on adventures at the Australia Zoo to meet

animals such as lemurs and crocodiles and learn about their natural habitats.

Inspired by the birth of her daughter, Grace, in 2021, Irwin wrote the book to connect young people with nature. "It's more important to me than ever to inspire the

next generation to love and appreciate our planet," she told *The Week Junior*.

Through her work, Irwin's goal is to inspire kids to take simple actions—like participating in a beach cleanup or planting a tree—to help wildlife. Her mission, she said, is "standing up and speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves."



The new book



Bindi Irwin

**HELPING HANDS**

The Australia Zoo has one of the world's largest wildlife hospitals and has treated more than 136,000 animals since 2004.

## Making art history

Marlon Mullen has become the first developmentally disabled artist to have a solo exhibition at the prestigious Museum of Modern Art in New York City. *Projects: Marlon Mullen* runs through April 20 and features 22 bold, colorful paintings inspired by art magazines and artists such as Pablo Picasso. Mullen, age 61, faces challenges with learning and communication and expresses himself through his art. A self-taught artist, he has been a member of the NIAD Art Center in Richmond, California, since 1986.



Marlon Mullen



Tom Cruise

## Top honor for actor

Hollywood star Tom Cruise, age 62, recently received the US Navy's highest civilian honor, the Distinguished Public Service Award, for his contributions to the Navy and the Marine Corps. The Navy credited Cruise for sparking interest in military service with his *Top Gun* films in 1986 and 2022. The first *Top Gun* led to a surge in Navy enlistments in the 1980s. The sequel, *Top Gun: Maverick*, reignited interest as Cruise's character returned to mentor a new class of fighter pilots. Cruise said of the award, "I am humbled and grateful for this extraordinary acknowledgment."

## OVERHEARD

“ ”



**"As long as people are respectful, there's always a chance you can change someone's mind through a conversation."**

Indigenous American supermodel Quannah ChasingHorse on creating positive change in the fashion industry





# Animals and the environment



## NATURAL WONDERS

Established coral reefs are usually between 5,000 and 10,000 years old.

Fish swim in a coral reef in the Red Sea.

## What is coral bleaching?

Small organisms called algae live inside corals. The algae and the coral rely on each other. If the coral gets stressed—because the water is too warm, for example—the algae is forced out and the coral's color fades to white. Bleached corals are at higher risk of starvation or disease.

Bleached corals



# Multivitamins could help coral

Just as some people take multivitamin tablets for their health, new research points to the possibility of using vitamins to help coral stay healthy. A team of scientists found that some ingredients in multivitamins can support the immune system of growing coral, which could help it withstand climate change.

Coral reefs are made up of many individual corals called polyps. These tiny sea creatures eventually develop a hard skeleton of limestone rock on the outside of their bodies and become permanently located in one place. Coral polyps can be found in many different parts of the ocean, but they develop only in shallow, warm water.

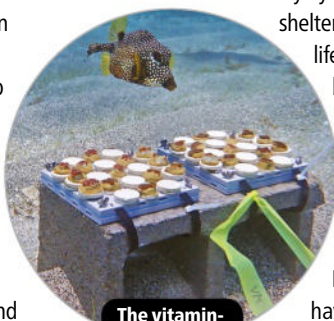
The world's biggest coral reef is the Great Barrier Reef, off the coast of Australia.

Coral reefs protect coastlines from being worn away by waves and provide food and shelter for a wide variety of marine life. A process known as coral bleaching (see box above) is putting reefs at risk, however, and climate change is making this more common.

Researchers from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts have been testing a way to boost the corals' immune systems. The team conducted tests on small, round tiles that had nutrients injected into them. These included iron, manganese, and zinc —

minerals that are also common ingredients in multivitamins. The scientists grew coral on the tiles so the polyps could absorb the nutrients. They found that it made the corals stronger and better able to resist threats to their survival, such as heat. They hope it will also help reefs recover from extreme weather events like hurricanes.

The team now wants to try this strategy on an artificial reef at the University of the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean. The reef, designed by scientists, is a concrete structure. The plan is to attach the tiles to the structure so their nutrients enter the surrounding water. Then young corals can be planted on the structure, where they will absorb nutrients from the water. The researchers hope the artificial reef will protect the shoreline and provide a home for coral while they work to restore natural reefs in the area.



The vitamin-infused tiles



## PLACE OF THE WEEK

### Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania

The Pocono Mountains, also known as the Poconos, is a 2,400-square-mile region of Pennsylvania that is surrounded by rivers and mountain ranges. There are nine state parks and two national parks in the Poconos, as well as 150 lakes, including Lake Wallenpaupack. In the winter, popular activities include skiing, tubing, and snowboarding, as well as sleigh rides, snowshoeing, and driving off-road vehicles. Deer, coyotes, foxes, black bears, bobcats, and minks live in the area. In total, more than 260 species of birds and 60 species of fish are found in the Poconos.



A gray fox





## DOGS THAT DON'T BARK

Instead of barking, dogs from the Basenji breed make a sound similar to a person yodeling.



Pups know the sounds of their favorite humans.

## Dogs can recognize different voices

When you call your dog's name from another room, does your pet know who's speaking? The answer may be yes. Researchers from Hungary have discovered that dogs can identify the voices of several different members of their human family.

The research team tested 31 pet dogs. Three human caretakers of each dog were asked to record their voices. All three people then sat quietly in front of the dog while the recording played. The pups usually approached—or at least spent more time looking at—the person whose

voice they heard. They responded best to the voice of their main owner.

"The study shows that dogs do know a lot about human voices—not only if they heard it before or not, but also who that voice belongs to," said researcher Anna Gábor. Only a few other animals, including horses and rhesus monkeys, have shown the ability to recognize human voices. Experts hope to study whether other mammals have this skill so they can better understand how different species learn to communicate with each other.

## Animal of the week

### Bald eagle



Although the bald eagle has been considered an American symbol for many years, it is now the official national bird of the US. A fan of eagles wrote letters to members of Congress, who passed a law making the designation official.

- **LIFE SPAN:** Typically 15 to 25 years in the wild
- **HABITAT:** North America, mostly in forests
- **SIZE:** Wingspan of 5 to 8 feet, 6 to 14 pounds
- **DIET:** Small mammals, fish, reptiles, other birds
- **FUN FACT:** After diving to catch a fish, bald eagles can use their wings to swim to shore.



## Good week / Bad week



### Numbats

For the first time in years, experts saw baby numbats, called numbubs, in the wild at Dryandra Woodland National Park in Australia. The local population has risen from five critically endangered numbats in 2018 to 25 in the park today.



### Giraffes

According to a new study, giraffes prefer flat areas and have trouble walking on slopes. This means that many protected nature reserves in Africa are not accessible to the animals, which are declining partly due to habitat loss.



## "What is more fierce: an alligator or a crocodile?"

Ryan, 8, New York

**Ron Magill,**  
Wildlife expert,  
Zoo Miami

That depends on the species. There are more than 25 species of crocodilians (which include alligators and crocodiles). African Nile and Australian saltwater crocodiles would be considered more fierce than any alligator, while Australian freshwater and dwarf crocodiles are much less so.



An Australian saltwater crocodile

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Find out more about Zoo Miami at [zoomiami.org](http://zoomiami.org).





# A hearty, spicy tradition

**Get to know the story behind a tasty dish that is beloved across the US.**

Chili has been a staple in the US for hundreds of years. How did it go from a roadside-stand offering to a kitchen-table favorite?

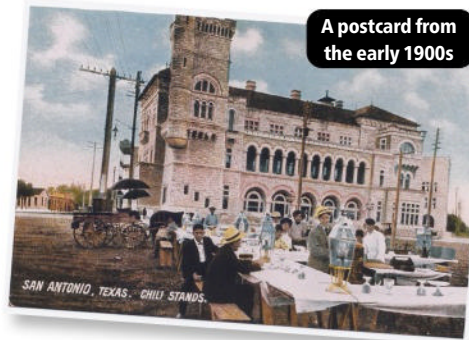
### What is chili?

Chili is considered a classic American comfort food. It is a thick sauce or stew traditionally made with red chile peppers, which gives the stew its spicy flavor and red color. Chili con carne is chili made with stewed meat that's either chopped or ground. Other ingredients can include beans, onions, and corn, as well as spices like cumin, chili powder, paprika, garlic, onion, coriander, oregano, and bay leaves. Chili can also be made without meat or with meat substitutes.

### Chili powder

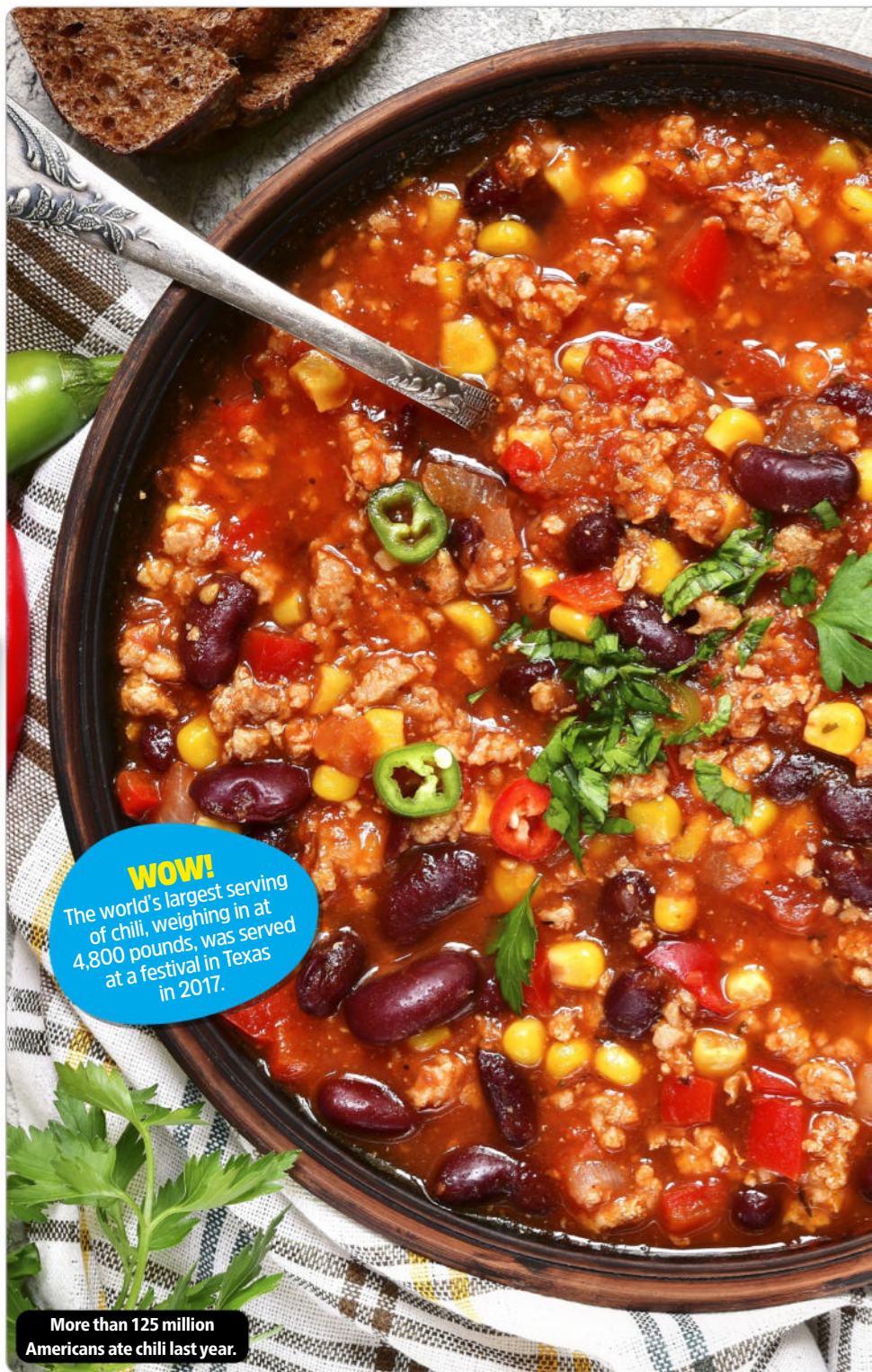


**A postcard from the early 1900s**



### How it started

People in the Americas have been farming chile peppers and using them to make food for more than 10,000 years. In 1828, after visiting San Antonio, Texas, a Houston resident named J.C. Clopper wrote the earliest known description of chili in his journal. He called it "a kind of hash that had nearly as many peppers in it as pieces of meat and then stewed together." Chili became more popular in the mid-1800s as an easy recipe cowboys on the move could make over a campfire. In San Antonio, Texas, in the 1860s, a group of local Mexican women were known as "the Chili Queens." They cooked and sold the dish in the city's Military Plaza to soldiers, cattle ranchers, and travelers.



**WOW!**

The world's largest serving of chili, weighing in at 4,800 pounds, was served at a festival in Texas in 2017.

**More than 125 million Americans ate chili last year.**





# in a single bowl

## HOT STUFF

There are between 3,000 and 4,000 types of chile peppers, with jalapeños being one of the most popular.

## Make easy beef chili



### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped (any color)
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 can (28 ounces) fire-roasted crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (31 ounces) beans (red kidney beans, black beans, or a combination), drained and rinsed
- 1 cup water
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### Instructions

1. Seek an adult's supervision before using a knife or the stove. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high. Add the onion and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the beef and cook, breaking the meat up with a spoon, until browned, about 5 minutes more.
2. Stir in the chili powder, then pour in the tomatoes, beans, and water and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered, for 20 minutes.
3. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Top with your favorite chili fixings, such as shredded cheese, sour cream, or green onions. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

## WRITE TO US!

If you make any type of chili, ask an adult to email a photo of you with your chili and a quote about it to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).



A chili cook-off

## Popularity spreads

At the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, a San Antonio chili stand introduced more people to the dish. In 1895, a man from Texas named Lyman T. Davis developed the recipe for his Wolf Brand Chili and sold it from the back of a wagon for five cents a bowl. By the 1920s, it was canned and sold in stores across the US. During the Great Depression (period from 1929 to the late 1930s when unemployment soared), chili restaurants—known as “chili parlors”—were popular in the Midwest and Southwest because they offered people a hot, inexpensive meal. Chili cook-offs—competition in which cooks submit their chili for judging—took off in the 1950s. In 1977, chili was named the official state dish of Texas.



Cincinnati chili is served over spaghetti.

## Regional tastes

Different US states have their preferred ways of preparing this classic dish. For example, Texans make their chili with beef but no beans and call it “Texas red.” Green chili is served in New Mexico, where it is prepared with locally grown green chile peppers. The barbecue history of Kansas City, Missouri, is incorporated into its chili, which is made with burnt ends, brisket, pork shoulder, Worcestershire sauce, beans, and cumin. In Cincinnati, Ohio, a signature dish—chili served over spaghetti—was invented in the 1920s by immigrants from Macedonia (in Southeastern Europe). In New England, cooks make this hearty dish even heartier by adding fresh vegetables.





## Rewriting early human history

Two recent studies have helped scientists learn more about when Homo sapiens (modern humans) interbred with Neanderthals. This species of prehistoric humans lived about 400,000 to 40,000 years ago in Europe and Asia. Modern humans, meanwhile, emerged about 300,000 years ago in Africa before migrating to other continents.

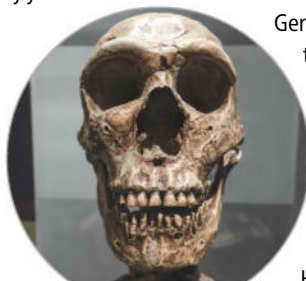
Scientists have known for many years that as Neanderthals and early Homo sapiens encountered each other, they mated and produced offspring. As a result, many people today get 1% to 2% of their DNA (the complex chemical that carries instructions for how a living thing should grow and develop) from Neanderthals. When this interbreeding occurred has been a mystery, however. Now researchers believe it took place about 47,000 years ago.

One study, published in the journal *Science*, looked at DNA found in the bones of 59 Homo sapiens that lived in Europe and Asia between 2,000 and 45,000 years ago, as well as DNA from 275 present-day humans. By tracking how the DNA changed over time, researchers determined that Neanderthals and Homo sapiens started

interbreeding about 50,500 years ago. They continued to do so for about 7,000 years, with most of the interbreeding taking place about 47,000 years ago. This lines up with other evidence that Neanderthals and Homo sapiens lived together in Europe and Asia for thousands of years.

Another study, published in *Nature*, supports this timeline. This study was done on the bones of humans that were found in what is now Germany. By analyzing the DNA taken from those remains, the researchers found they belonged to a mother, a daughter, and at least one other relative that lived about 45,000 years ago. Researchers also found that these early Homo sapiens had Neanderthal DNA, which entered their genes about 47,000 years ago.

Knowing when Neanderthals and modern humans interbred can give scientists a better idea of when the first Homo sapiens left Africa and spread to the rest of the world. The new findings suggest that the first migration of modern humans out of Africa had ended 43,500 years ago. As they moved around, Neanderthal DNA may have helped them resist diseases and withstand harsh, cold climates.



The skull of an early human ancestor

### Living side by side



The *H. erectus* (left) and *P. boisei* footprints

Two tracks of footprints that belonged to two different species of ancient humans were made within days of each other about 1.5 million years ago, scientists have determined. One set is thought to have been left by *Homo erectus*, which is an ancestor of Homo sapiens, while the other is from *Paranthropus boisei*, a more distant relative of modern humans. The findings are the first evidence that the species lived alongside each other.

The footprints were first found in 2021 in Kenya. *H. erectus* had a large brain and a varied diet, including meat from animals they hunted. *P. boisei* had a smaller brain and a large jaw and likely ate plants and grasses. Researchers believe the species were not in competition with each other for food and coexisted for more than 100,000 years.





## World's largest iceberg is on the move

The oldest and largest iceberg in the world, known as A23a, is on the move after months of being stuck in one place. It is now drifting through the Southern Ocean, near Antarctica. Experts at the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) expect A23a to eventually reach warmer waters near the island of South Georgia, where it will break apart into smaller icebergs and melt.

A23a is about 1,312 feet thick and covers 1,418 square miles, making it slightly larger than Rhode Island. The BAS said the massive iceberg's journey "has been marked by intriguing scientific events." In 1986, it broke off from Antarctica's Filchner Ice Shelf. Not long after, A23a became lodged on the seafloor, which is common for large icebergs, and remained in place for more than 30 years.

As parts of the iceberg melted underwater, it became lighter and came loose. Experts said



The iceberg A23a in the Southern Ocean

**HIGH STANDARD**  
To qualify as an iceberg, an ice formation must be more than 16 feet above sea level and at least 5,382 square feet in area.

this process is natural and most likely unrelated to climate change. In 2020, A23a began drifting north. Last August, it got caught in a column of rotating water where it remained, spinning in place, until recently.

"It's exciting to see A23a on the move again after periods of being stuck," said Andrew Meijers, an oceanographer with the BAS. He and other experts will track the iceberg's route and study how it affects the marine ecosystems it passes through.



CUE6 playing basketball

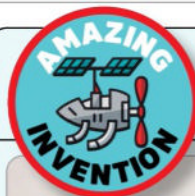
## Humanoid robot shoots hoops

A two-legged robot in Japan sank a basketball shot and set a new world record. CUE6 uses artificial intelligence (AI, when a computer imitates human learning). It made a basket from 80.6 feet away, which was the farthest basketball shot ever made by a humanoid robot.

Built by scientists at the Toyota Engineering Society, CUE6 can roll around on wheels, pick up a ball, transfer it from hand to hand, and dribble. When it shoots, it assesses

the best arm position, strength, and posture. Using AI, CUE6 adjusts its movements in real time, based on its previous attempts and on changing conditions, like the ball's air pressure.

The researchers will continue to improve CUE6, and it could one day beat the longest shot by a human, which was 113.6 feet. But that's not their only goal. "Ultimately, I want to see a robot dunking like Michael Jordan," said the lead engineer.



## A karaoke machine that plays anything



SonicPlay

A new karaoke machine can take any song and turn it into a backing track. If you connect your phone or pop in a memory card, the portable SonicPlay will play songs from your music library. Flip a switch on the side, and the device will instantly remove the vocals

from a track and play the instrumentals only.

When you're ready to sing, you can follow along as lyrics scroll across the screen. The machine has two microphones, five voice modes, colorful lights, and a powerful pair of speakers for excellent sound quality.



# Photos of the week

## Bird beauty

A robin perches on an icy branch in the UK.



## All ears

An Alaskan hare is barely visible in this photo taken in the US.



GETTY IMAGES (6)





## Teaming up

Two doe mule deer huddle together during a storm in the US.



## Winter scene

This image of a red fox was taken in Canada.



## Diving in

A gentoo penguin leaps off an iceberg into the Antarctic Ocean.



## Who me?

This photo of a snowy owl was captured in the US.





## HEAVY METAL

The College Football Playoff National Championship trophy is 26.5 inches tall and made of 24-karat gold, bronze, and stainless steel.

# Sports



Ohio State players with the championship trophy

## A coaching milestone



Notre Dame's head coach, Marcus Freeman (above), has made history. He has become the first Black head coach to lead a college team to the CFP championship game. He is also of Korean descent, which also makes him the first Asian coach to appear in the finals.

# Ohio State wins college football title

On January 20, Ohio State University defeated the University of Notre Dame, 34–23, to win this year's College Football Playoff (CFP) National Championship. The game was played at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia. Ohio State, which had not won a national title since 2014, now has nine overall.

The CFP format was new this season, and for the first time, it began with 12 teams: the five highest-ranked conference champions plus the next seven teams with the highest rankings. Ohio State was seeded (ranked) eighth in the playoffs, and to reach the title game, they beat ninth-seeded Tennessee, top-seeded Oregon, then fifth-seeded University

of Texas. They dominated their opponents and won each of their first three games by double digits and a combined score of 111–52.

Notre Dame was the seventh seed in the tournament. On their way to the final, they beat 10th-seeded University of Indiana, second-seeded University of Georgia, then sixth-seeded Penn State.

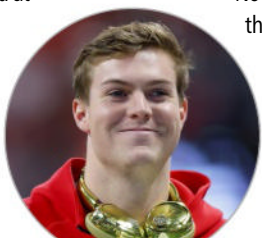
In the championship game, Notre Dame scored a touchdown on the opening drive, but Ohio State scored 31 consecutive points after that.

Notre Dame fought back and trimmed their deficit to 16 points in the third quarter. In the fourth quarter, with a little more than six minutes left to play, their offense kept the team's hopes alive by

delivering a touchdown and a two-point conversion, cutting the lead to 31–23.

The biggest play of the game came with a little more than two minutes left. After Notre Dame used two of their three time-outs, Ohio State needed to gain 11 yards on a third down so they could get a first down and seal the win. Their quarterback Will Howard connected with wide receiver Jeremiah Smith for a 56-yard gain that ended at Notre Dame's 10-yard line. After a few more plays and with 26 seconds left, Ohio State kicked the game-clinching field goal.

Howard finished with 231 passing yards and two touchdowns, while Smith had five receptions for 88 yards and a touchdown. Another Ohio State star was running back Quinshon Judkins, who compiled 121 yards and three touchdowns.



Will Howard

## THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

### COLLEGE BASKETBALL

The first-ever Coretta Scott King Classic, a doubleheader with four women's teams, was played on January 20. It was named in honor of the activist, who was married to civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. In one game, undefeated UCLA, the top team in the country, beat 25th-ranked Baylor University, 72–57. In the other game, seventh-ranked University of Texas beat the eighth-ranked University of Maryland, 89–51.

Chloe Kim



### HOCKEY

On January 16, the Washington Capitals' Alexander Ovechkin scored the lone goal in his team's 1–0 overtime win over the Ottawa Senators. He also set a new NHL record for number of goalies a player has scored against: 179.

### SNOWBOARDING

Chloe Kim and Maddie Mastro, both of the US, placed first and second at the Laax Open on January 18. They made history with moves that had never been done in a half-pipe competition.





## COURT QUEENS

In women's 3-on-3 basketball, Team USA has won one Olympic gold medal and three World Cups.



Courtney Williams of the Lunar Owls (left) and Courtney Vandersloot of the Mist

## Women's 3-on-3 hoops league starts

Unrivaled, a new 3-on-3 women's basketball league, began its highly anticipated first season on January 17. The league was cofounded by WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) stars Napheesa Collier and Breanna Stewart. It is an important addition to the sports world because it provides an opportunity for many WNBA players to compete in the US during the off-season instead of joining teams overseas.

There are six Unrivaled clubs—the Laces, Lunar Owls, Mist, Phantom, Rose, and Vinyl—with six players each. Among the league's WNBA stars are Collier, Stewart, Angel Reese, Rhyne Howard, and Sabrina Ionescu. All the games are played at a custom-built venue near Miami, Florida.

Unrivaled's game style resembles fast-paced pickup games. The action takes place on a court

that is 72 feet long, which is 22 feet shorter than a WNBA court, and there are some special rules. For example, a game has three seven-minute quarters, followed by a fourth quarter that ends when a team scores 11 points more than whatever the higher score was at the end of the third.

Each game day has competitions between two different sets of teams. In the first-ever game, the Lunar Owls pulled off an impressive comeback to defeat the Mist, 84–80. The Owls' Skylar Diggins-Smith sunk a three-pointer to clinch the victory. In the second game, the Vinyl beat the Rose, 79–73.

After the first three days of play, the Laces, Lunar Owls, and Vinyl remained undefeated. The regular season ends March 10. The four teams with the best records will qualify for the semifinals, and the championship game is set for March 17.

## SPOTLIGHT ON...



### Ryder Dodd

AGE: 19 SPORT: WATER POLO  
TEAM: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

**Pool time** My family was always part of the aquatics scene. My parents swam, my uncle swam, and my grandparents were around swimming. My brother started playing water polo before I did, so I was always at his games. When I was around 6, I jumped in during one and fell in love.

**Like Mike** When I was younger, an athlete I looked up to was NBA star Michael Jordan. I really liked his work ethic and that he was in love with winning. You need that to play a sport at a high level.



**Staying fit** UCLA probably has one of the hardest training routines. During the season, we practice six days a week. Our usual schedule is lifting weights from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m., then practice from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., where we're swimming and playing water polo. On days off, I like to take my dog to the beach.

**Tiny rituals** Before games, I wear a lucky pair of socks and I chew a piece of gum to keep me awake.

**Focus trick** In big games, falling back on your routines really helps you stay centered and not think about anything bigger than what is really going on.

**Major moments** I had two big accomplishments last year: winning the NCAA national championship and winning a bronze at the Olympics. Playing for Team USA with my brother and winning at the highest stage in water polo—it doesn't get much better than that. Going for gold at the 2028 Olympics is a long-term goal. I'd also like to win another national championship. You're never satisfied with just one.



## COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Kristy Moore Nelson**

Team: **Girls at the Barn (barrel racing)**

**"Ms. Kristy is very positive, encouraging, and patient! She has a gift for teaching her students how to simplify all things in riding. She is very humble, realistic with her expectations, and down to earth. My confidence and riding abilities have improved so much because of her dedication and leadership. Ms. Kristy always goes above and beyond for her horses and her students. She is the very best coach in the world!"** Megan, 11, Texas



To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.





## Dog Man coming to theaters

An animated film based on Dav Pilkey's popular book series features an unusual hero battling an evil cat.

A popular character from graphic novels is headed to the big screen. Dog Man, the hero in a best-selling book series by Dav Pilkey, is starring in a new animated comedy that arrives in movie theaters on January 31.

As readers of Pilkey's series know, Dog Man comes into being after a police officer and his dog are in an accident and the dog's head is sewn onto the man's body. The movie weaves together elements and characters from several books, but

the main story comes from the third book, *A Tale of Two Kitties*. In the film, Dog Man is charged with trying to stop evil cat Petey. Things get complicated after Petey clones himself and creates

L'il Petey, a sweet kitten that bonds with Dog Man. When L'il Petey ends up in danger, the enemies unite to save him.

*Dog Man* was directed by Peter Hastings, who also worked on a TV series based on Pilkey's *Captain Underpants* books. "My sensibility and Dav's are very similar," he told *The Week Junior*. "We like things that

are intelligently silly, and we like things to have emotion." Hastings, who voiced Dog Man on screen, kept the tone and style of Pilkey's work but added some new material. One thing viewers can look for is a phone number for a funny hotline that is a real working number. Pilkey fans, meanwhile, should be able to spot familiar signs, details, and *Captain Underpants* characters George and Harold.

Although the film is full of humor, Hastings said it has meaningful lessons, too. An important one: "Even when times are hard, things are going to be OK when you've got your people around you," he said. "You're not alone—and better together."

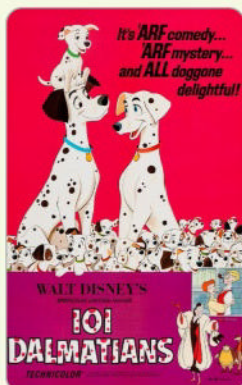


Peter Hastings

### 3 more dog movies

#### 101 Dalmatians

In this animated Disney classic from 1961, two dalmatians fall in love. After their 101 puppies are stolen by Cruella de Vil, the dogs and their humans race to save them.



#### Because of Winn-Dixie

Based on the best-selling novel by Kate DiCamillo, this 2005 film follows Opal, a young girl who moves to a small town and befriends a stray dog. He helps her make friends and adjust to her new home.



#### Isle of Dogs

This stop-motion animated film from award-winning director Wes Anderson was released in 2018. After a flu outbreak, a quirky 12-year-old goes on an adventure to rescue his lost dog from a trash-filled island.







## HOLLYWOOD HISTORY

One of the first films added to the National Film Registry in 1989 was the 1939 musical *The Wizard of Oz*.



Spy Kids

## New films in national registry

Each year, the Library of Congress selects American movies with “cultural, historic, or aesthetic importance” and adds them to a list called the National Film Registry. Last month, a set of movies that included the sci-fi adventure *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (1982) and the action-comedy *Spy Kids* (2001) were added to the collection, bringing its current total to 900.

The National Film Registry was established in 1988 to help preserve the country’s film legacy. A film is eligible for the registry 10 years after its release. *Home Alone*, *Toy Story*, and *Shrek* are among the films in the archive.

Before the latest picks were made, members of the public submitted 6,700 films for consideration. Jacqueline Stewart, chair of the National Film Preservation Board, said the selection process

involves extensive research and discussion. The main goal in making decisions is “showing the true diversity of filmmaking,” she said.

The new films that were added span nearly 130 years of cinema, with the oldest one being the 1895 silent film *Annabelle Serpentine Dance*. Other



The Miracle Worker

films that made the cut include *Pride of the Yankees* (1942), a drama about baseball star Lou Gehrig, the sci-fi classic *Invaders from Mars* (1953), and *The Miracle Worker* (1962), an inspiring story about disability rights activist Helen Keller. Another pick was *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt* (1989), an award-winning documentary about the National AIDS Memorial Quilt, an important symbol in LGBTQ history.

The public can now submit nominations to the Library of Congress for the 2025 list by visiting [loc.gov/film](http://loc.gov/film). The deadline is August 15.



## THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST



**The Thundermans: Undercover** (Nickelodeon) Wednesdays at 7 p.m. ET (Paramount+)

There is a new spin-off of the Nickelodeon series about a superhero family. This one follows twins Phoebe and Max Thunderman, along with their younger sister Chloe, as they investigate a mysterious threat in their town.



**My Best Friend's an Animal** (Disney+) (Hulu) (National Geographic WILD)

This new documentary series tells the stories of humans forging unlikely yet extraordinary friendships with animals in the wild. The people include a rhino caregiver in Africa and a diver connecting with a Caribbean reef shark.



**Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug and Cat Noir** (Disney+)

It's time for season six of this popular series about teens fighting villains in Paris, France. The action picks up after the events of the recent *Miraculous World: London at the Edge of Time* special and the previous season.



## READER RECOMMENDS



**Just Add Magic** (Prime Video)

“This show is about best friends who find a cookbook with recipes that have magical powers, such as rewinding time or uncovering lost items. They become the book’s ‘protectors,’ a role that has been passed down for generations. They go on adventures, solve mysteries, and use magic, but they are still regular middle schoolers. My favorite episode is the first one, ‘Just Add Opposites,’ because the friends try to make a recipe, but they mess it up and make one that causes them to do the opposite of what they’re told. There is also a sequel series, *Just Add Magic: Mystery City*.” Zana, 10, Massachusetts

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).





## On screen

**DID YOU KNOW?**

An animated Donkey Kong Country TV series aired from 1997 to 2000.



Donkey Kong Country Returns HD

# A fun Donkey Kong adventure

**D**onkey Kong Country Returns HD is a new action-adventure platform game. It was recently released exclusively for the Nintendo Switch.

The original side-scrolling Donkey Kong Country Returns was released for the Nintendo Wii in 2010 and was a major hit. Nintendo put out a remake with some new levels for the handheld 3DS in 2013. The new version combines the two older ones, with updated graphics and the additional levels from the 2013 release.

In the game, a volcano erupts and wakes a group of angry walking masks called the Tiki Tak Tribe. When they show up on Donkey Kong Island, chaos breaks out. The Tiki Taks put most of the island's animals into a trance, then steal Donkey Kong and his pal Diddy Kong's banana stash.



The thieves split from the scene of the crime, but DK and Diddy set off after them, beginning a wild adventure that takes them all over the island.

The action begins deep in the jungle, where DK swings on vines, blasts through barrels, climbs tall trees, and pounds the ground. Diddy pops up to help out, and along the way, the pair collect bananas and blocks, which can open up special additional levels and prizes. The game also features a trip to the beach, where parties, hungry sharks, and a ride on a rhinoceros await. It also has pirate ships and ruins, old mines to brave, and volcanoes to survive.

You can play the game solo, but in two-player co-op mode, you and a friend can team up as DK and Diddy and defeat the Tiki Taks and, most important, get the bananas back.



## PODCAST OF THE WEEK

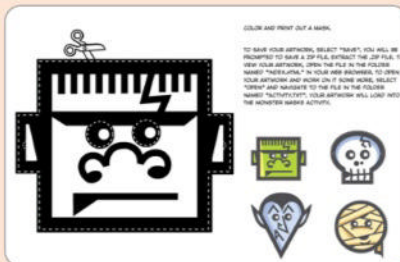
### ONCE UPON A BEAT

Major podcast platforms

Listen to hip-hop-styled retellings of classic stories such as *Aladdin*, *The Ugly Duckling*, and *Goldilocks*. The series puts new spins on plots, too. For example, in "RAPunzel," instead of the princess in the tower having long hair, she has curly locks with a mind of their own.



## WEBSITE OF THE WEEK



### TOY THEATER ART

[tinyurl.com/TWJUS-ArtActivities](http://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-ArtActivities)

Explore your creativity with this site full of interactive art activities. There are tools that can help you do things like draw snowflakes, build dinosaurs, or make monster masks (above). In a section on symmetry, you can make mirror image drawings, spirals, and other fun designs.



## CHANNEL OF THE WEEK

### BE SMART

[tinyurl.com/TWJUS-BeSmart](http://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-BeSmart)

This channel featuring biologist Joe Hanson delves into topics related to animals, physics, evolution, space, and other science-related subjects. His videos answer mysteries such as why ice is slippery, why humans don't hibernate in the winter, and how people make diamonds.







## BOOK OF THE WEEK

# Inside the Park

By Andrea Williams

(HarperCollins)

Timothy's family nicknamed him Pumpsie in honor of Pumpsie Green, who became the first Black player on the Boston Red Sox in 1959. While 12-year-old Pumpsie is struggling with hitting on his youth baseball team, his favorite pro team, the Wildcats, is having a good year. If the Wildcats win their next three home games, they will make the playoffs for the first time in Pumpsie's life. Pumpsie and his mom have tickets to one of the games, and the Wildcats defeat their opponent! The next day, Pumpsie's twin sister, Tiana, is cast in a commercial with the Wildcats. Pumpsie is jealous because Tiana doesn't even care about baseball. After the game, Tiana and a dog actor, Campy, start filming the commercial outside the stadium. When thunderstorms move in while they are on set, Campy runs away. Pumpsie chases after the dog, and they get trapped inside the stadium when the power goes out. Pumpsie's family doesn't realize he's missing. What's more, two criminals are lurking inside the stadium, trying to sabotage the Wildcats' final regular-season game. Will Pumpsie and Campy be able to stop the bad guys? This fast-paced adventure has a home run twist of an ending.



## ASK THE AUTHOR

### Andrea Williams

We spoke to the author of the Book of the Week.

#### Did you love baseball while growing up?

Yes, my dad got me into baseball. We liked turning on the TV and watching the Atlanta Braves or the Chicago Cubs play. I also played softball.

#### What team do you watch the most today?

The Seattle Mariners.

#### Is the stadium in the book based on a real one you've been to?

In high school, I worked at Kauffman Stadium, home of

the Kansas City Royals. I was reminded of my experience working there

when I was writing about Pumpsie running around the stadium.

#### Where do you most enjoy writing?

I like to write in public libraries because I enjoy being around other books. They remind me of what I'm working toward.

#### Favorite winter activity?

Watching college basketball!



## 4 entertaining books about superheroes

Will these characters with special powers be able to save the day?



### The Adventures of Invisible Boy: Zeroes to Heroes

By Doogie Horner  
(G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers)

In the second book of this graphic novel series, Stanley and Gene become invisible and use their powers to fight crime. Their first mission: Track down the criminals who stole from the store that belongs to Stanley's family. Ages 8–12



### Amazing Adventures: Marvel Super Stories

By Marvel Entertainment and various creators

(Harry N. Abrams)

This story collection was created by 15 well-known cartoonists who write about popular superheroes such as Black Panther, Captain America, and Thor. Jarrett J. Krosoczka, who writes the Lunch Lady series, contributes a story about Spider-Man. Ages 8–12



### The Stupendous Switcheroo

By Mary Winn Heider, illustrated by Chad Sell

(Knopf Books for Young Readers)

In this zany start to a new book series, a boy gets a different superpower every day. One day, he has the ability to talk to cats, and another day he is able move objects with his mind. The illustrations make the story even funnier. Ages 8–12



### Superworld: Save Noah

By Yarrow and Carrie Cheney  
(Random House Books for Young Readers)

A meteor crashed to Earth on Noah's seventh birthday, and it gave everyone superpowers except him! Now at age 12, Noah can't fly, scale buildings, or turn vegetables into candy like his friends and family can. But to defeat an evil villain, the world will need his help. Ages 8–12



## READER RECOMMENDS



### The School for Good and Evil

By Soman Chainani  
"This book is about best friends Sophie and Agatha. Sophie dreams of attending the School for Good and Evil, while Agatha is happy to stay home and be friends with Sophie. When they do get taken to the school, Sophie gets dropped off at the School for Evil while Agatha is taken to the School for Good. Both girls think their placements are a mistake, but they are just uncovering the truth." Guilad, 8, California

Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).





## How to...

### DID YOU KNOW?

The oldest Lunar New Year parade in the US, dating back to 1851, takes place in San Francisco, California.



# Celebrate Lunar New Year

Enjoy the traditions and culture of this special holiday that begins on January 29.

Lunar New Year, a celebration that dates back more than 3,000 years, marks the start of spring and a new year. It is observed in many Asian countries, including China, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore. "It's a lucky time of year and a time to celebrate traditions with family and friends," Danielle Chang, host of the culinary series *Lucky Chow*, told *The Week Junior*. Here are some ways to celebrate.

### Know the history

Lunar New Year is celebrated on a different date each year and observed for 15 days. This year, Lunar New Year begins on January 29. The year 2025 is the Year of the Snake (see sidebar at right). Different regions have their own traditions. For example, in South Korea, Lunar New Year is called Seollal. It lasts three days, and children wear colorful *hanbok* (traditional Korean clothing). In Vietnam, Lunar New Year is called Tet, and people decorate their homes with flowers.

### Get in the holiday spirit

The new year often starts with a deep cleaning to clear away the old and make way for a fresh start. Celebrations kick off with different generations reuniting for dinner. In another tradition, relatives

often give children in their families *hong bao*, which are red envelopes with money inside.

### Decorate with symbolic touches

You can prepare for the holiday by making decorations with two colors associated with Lunar New Year: red (which symbolizes luck and happiness) and gold (which represents wealth). You can also incorporate the year's zodiac animal into your decorations. "You can draw pictures of a snake or make a snake garland out of colorful paper to hang," says Chang. Lanterns are a significant part of the celebration, and you can make your own (see the craft instructions on the next page).

### Feast on traditional foods

Foods traditionally eaten for Lunar New Year have special symbolism. Many families stay up late the night before to make dumplings, which are believed to bring prosperity for the coming year. "Longevity noodles," which are unbroken lo mein noodles, symbolize a long life (see recipe on next page). Citrus fruits like oranges, tangerines, and pomelos are thought to bring good luck and abundance. Sweet glutinous rice balls, treats enjoyed by many celebrants at the end of the holiday, symbolize family unity and togetherness.



Red envelopes symbolize good wishes.

### The Year of the Snake



The Chinese zodiac is a 12-year cycle of animals that represent each year. This year, 2025, is the Year of the Snake. The Year of the Snake also occurred in 2013, 2001, and every 12 years counting backward before that.

People born in the year of a particular animal are believed to possess the personality traits of that animal. The Year of the Snake is associated with being mysterious, wise, and eager to learn new things.

The other zodiac animals—each with their own personality traits—are the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. Last year's animal was the dragon, and the animal for 2026 will be the horse.



## LOOK TO THE LIGHT

Lunar New Year lanterns symbolize driving out darkness and ushering in hope for the new year.

## How to...



# Create your own festive paper lanterns

### What you'll need

- Recycled paper (such as maps, newspaper, sheet music, gift wrap), construction paper, or cardstock
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Optional: battery-operated tealight

### Instructions

1. Cut a rectangle of paper about 8 inches wide and 5 to 7 inches tall. Fold it in half lengthwise (along the long side).
2. Use a ruler and pencil to draw a line  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in from the edge of the long side. Mark dots  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch apart along that line. Repeat on the folded edge, aligning dots with the first set of marks. Use the ruler to draw lines connecting each dot on the open side to the corresponding dot on the folded edge.
3. With scissors, cut along the lines, stopping at the first drawn line. (Do not cut all the way through.) Unfold the paper.
4. Cut two strips of paper for the edging. Each should be  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide and the length of the rectangle's long side plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
5. Use the glue stick generously to adhere paper strips to the long sides of the rectangle, leaving the extra  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch off at one end (which you'll use as a tab to glue the lantern closed). Roll rectangle into a cylinder. Re-press strips down if needed.
6. Use the glue stick to adhere the overhanging ends of the paper strips, closing the cylinder. Hold seams for 1 to 2 minutes until the glue dries.
7. Optional step: Add a handle to the lantern. Cut a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch strip of paper as long as you'd like the handle to be plus 1 inch. Glue the ends to the lantern top. Place a battery-operated tealight inside if you wish.

# Stir up "longevity" noodles

### Ingredients

#### For the sauce

- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice cooking wine
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water

#### For the lo mein

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced, with white, light green, and green parts separated
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup julienned carrots
- 1 cup julienned bell pepper
- Big handful baby spinach
- 14 to 16 ounces cooked lo mein noodles

### Instructions

1. Make the sauce: Combine the cornstarch and all the sauce ingredients. Whisk them smooth to combine. Set aside.
2. Make the lo mein: Heat the oil in a large pan or wok over high heat. Add the garlic, white and light green scallions, carrots, and red pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, for about 2 minutes.
3. Add the prepared sauce, spinach, and noodles. Cook, tossing to coat, until the spinach is wilted and the vegetables are crisp-tender, about 3 more minutes. You can add a splash more water to the pan to loosen the sauce if necessary.
4. Divide the lo mein noodles among bowls and top with the dark green parts of the scallions. Makes about 4 servings.

## WARNING!

Ask an adult's permission before using a knife or the stove.





# Puzzles



## Keyword crossword

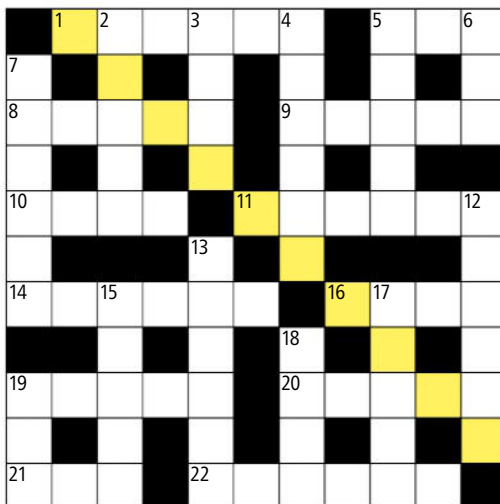
Once you have completed the crossword, transfer the letters in the yellow boxes, in order, into the boxes below to get the answer to the Keyword question.

### ACROSS

- 1 Person on the crew of a boat or ship
- 5 Gorilla or orangutan, for example
- 8 Cutting it may cause your eyes to water
- 9 Belly button
- 10 A black bird (but not a blackbird)
- 11 Philadelphia football team
- 14 Expanding circle on a disturbed surface of water
- 16 Color of the Earth when seen from space
- 19 Numerical term on a typical carton of eggs
- 20 Slimy green stuff on the surface of a pond
- 21 Hot drink often served in special cups
- 22 Egg-laying creature with a shell of its own

### DOWN

- 2 Mi \_\_\_\_ ("My friend," in Spanish)
- 3 It lets you jump from one website to another
- 4 Where fashion models walk or planes land
- 5 Metalworkers pound out shapes on this object's surface
- 6 Snakelike fish that may cause a shock
- 7 Sport known in Europe as football
- 12 Harry Potter's Quidditch team position
- 13 Category for Pluto from 1930 until 2006
- 15 Round item that is cut into triangles and delivered in a square box
- 17 Allowed under the law
- 18 Bad \_\_\_\_ day (day when you look messy or things go wrong)
- 19 Item found in quantities all over dice and dominoes



Keyword question: What hat-wearing animal has had his own zip code, 20252, since 1964?

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

## CODE CRACKER

In this coded list of places known for being cold, every letter has been replaced with a substitute. The same substitutions are used throughout the list. Hint: Every X here is an uncoded A. Use the letter patterns you find to crack the code. (NEED ANOTHER HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

A			A						A
X	L	B	X	O	H	B	F	H	X
J	S	M	L	B	Y	K	Y	O	Y
L	S	O	B	I	V	S	D	Y	
						A			
S	M	B	Y	O	Q	V	X	H	Y

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

## THREE FOR ALL

Sort this list into three familiar three-part phrases, like THREE-RING CIRCUS or SALT LAKE CITY.

FLOOD FOOT CHAIN BEST FAST  
FORWARD FOOD WARNING FLASH

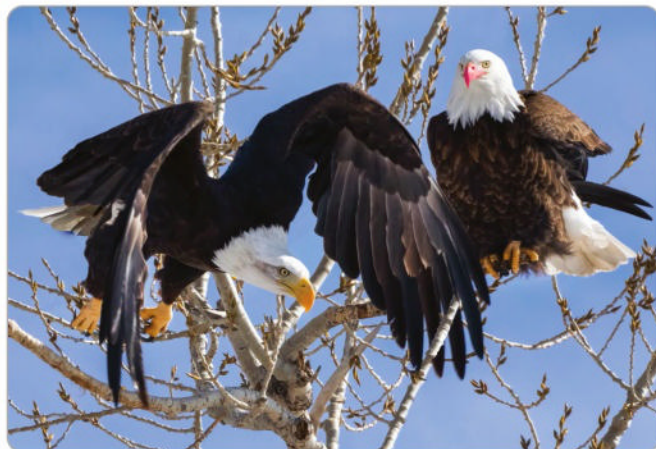

## Cutting room

Divide this grid into five sections so each section consists of five adjacent boxes containing the numbers 1–5. The sections may have different shapes.

5	3	1	4	1
5	1	3	2	4
3	1	2	4	3
5	4	3	5	5
4	1	2	2	2

## Spot the difference

These two pictures of bald eagles appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?







One of the works of art

## Rooting for radish sculptures

The city of Oaxaca, Mexico, has carved out a quirky place in history with its Noche de Rábanos ("Night of the Radishes") contest, held annually since 1897. In a quest to win cash prizes, competitors transform giant radishes into elaborate sculptures, ranging from people and animals to mythical creatures. The city grows the radishes, which can weigh up to seven pounds, and provides them to the participants for free. "It reminds me of my childhood, when they said, 'Don't play with your food,'" one artist commented. "But here they say, 'Sculpt something with your food.'"



Posing for a record

## Breaking records with a twist

Thousands of people stretched the limits of possibility when they broke five world records in one day at a yoga event in India. Yoga practitioners from 20 countries prepared for a month to make sure their positions were just right for the attempts. The record for most people performing the wheel pose at once was impressive (390), but more than three times as many performed a sun salutation at once (1,372). "Yoga teaches us to embrace each day as a new opportunity," said organizer Himalayan Siddhaa Akshar.



Alissimon Minnitt and the enormous fungus

## Meals from a mega mushroom

While on a family walk in Buckinghamshire, England, Alissimon Minnitt stumbled upon a giant mushroom in a field. The puffball mushroom was "about twice the size of my head," Minnitt said — and weighed a whopping 11 pounds. She told BBC News, "It looks like something from another planet." Although many wild mushrooms are poisonous, Minnitt and her family are expert mushroom hunters, so they knew the puffball was safe to eat. It provided the family with a week's worth of meals, including mushroom curry, mushroom "steaks," and even a mushroom pizza crust.

Real or fake?



Do scientists have a hidden talent?

## A real-life invisibility cloak

It might seem like something out of Harry Potter's world, but scientists in China have invented a new material that can make people and things "invisible." The material's molecules respond to light, causing it to change color to match its surroundings. One possible use for it could be to make clothes that blend into the background. "Applying this technology to clothing could make an individual effectively 'invisible,'" one of the scientists said. Is this story real, or have we hidden a lie?\*

\*Real! The new material uses a process called self-adaptive photochromism to change color. Scientists hope to develop the material further so it can change into a wider range of shades and switch between colors even faster.





# Your turn

## Editor's note

When we invited you to share your hopes for the nation in Issue 247, we were excited to see if you would take us up on our offer—and you did! The responses are starting to come in, and we are reading every one. You can see the form that Eva, a 12-year-old reader from New Jersey, submitted in the red box below. Given that the US has bid farewell to the outgoing President and a new Presidential administration has begun (p2), this is a good time to think about our nation. What does America mean to you, and what are your hopes and dreams for the country? If you'd like to participate, ask an adult to download the form at [kids.theweekjunior.com/activities](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/activities). You can fill it out and have it emailed to us at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Or you can keep the filled-out form for yourself or share it with family or friends to inspire a discussion. Either way, remember that kids are important and your ideas matter!



Andrea Barbalich  
Editorial Director



## CHARITY OF THE WEEK



### Heart to Heart International

This organization works to improve access to healthcare in communities in need and those affected by disasters. It distributes hygiene kits and medical supplies and provides vaccinations and other care through its mobile health clinics. Since the group's founding in 1992, it has provided over \$3 billion in aid to people in more than 130 countries. Find out more at [hearttoheart.org](https://hearttoheart.org).



## Drawing for dogs

“When I heard about dogs that were abandoned after Hurricane Milton, I knew I had to act. I combined two things I love—dogs and drawing. I asked people for photos of their dogs and I drew them to raise money for Lucky Dog Animal Rescue, a shelter that helps neglected dogs. My dad set up a page on a crowdfunding site, and we reached out to people we knew. So far, we've raised more than \$1,000 from making 36 drawings of 25 dogs, eight cats, two horses, and even a bearded dragon! It makes me feel proud to see how people have responded. I know the charity will help the dogs find their forever friends and homes.”



Henry, 10, New York

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).

**RIDDLE OF THE WEEK**  
What can't be taken standing still?

Steps



## Your hopes for the nation

Eva, a 12-year-old from New Jersey, loves that the US is a free country where anyone can choose a job they like when they grow up. She hopes everyone can be safe and healthy. As a reader of *The Week Junior*, you may be forming opinions about your hopes and dreams for America. If so, we want to hear them! Go to [kids.theweekjunior.com/activities](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/activities) to download a form like the one shown at right. Fill it out, then have an adult email it to us at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). We'll feature some of the submissions we receive on this page in future issues.

First name: Eva Age: 12 State: New Jersey

What do you love most about America and why?  
I love that it's a free country because when you grow up you can have any job you want.

If you could describe America in three words, which words would you choose?  
A nice country

What are some of the hopes you have for our country in 2025 and in the future?  
I hope that we're all safe and healthy.

Draw a picture of what America looks like to you.



THE WEEK  
Junior

IT'S YOUR TURN

Email your news, views, and photos to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).



# Your turn



## YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com), along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.



"I enjoyed reading the first book in the Keeper of the Lost Cities series and am looking forward to reading the rest."

Abigail, 10, California

"I lie on my copies of *The Week Junior* so my mom can't recycle them." Patrick, 9, Illinois



"I like to read *The Week Junior* at brunch on the weekends and share facts with my family."

Juliette, 9, Washington



## Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Chrystelle Panatier**

School: **Sligo Creek Elementary School**

"Mme Panatier makes everyone feel included. She makes learning fun. For example, she gives us homework to write about our favorite music artist. She plays Taylor Swift and Johnny Cash songs on her guitar and is very funny. She loves Harry Potter and sorts us using a sorting hat at the start of the year. She makes us feel special."

Barrett, 10, Maryland

**Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!**

**Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).**

## Puzzle answers (from page 26)



**Keyword answer:**

Smokey Bear

**Code cracker**

Antarctica  
Mount Everest  
North Pole  
Outer space

**Three for all**

best foot forward  
fast food chain  
flash flood warning

5	3	1	4	1
5	1	3	2	4
3	1	2	4	3
5	4	3	5	5
4	1	2	2	2



**Quiz answers (from page 30)** 1 A Tale of Two Kitties 2 False. The designation was just made official. 3 a) Campy 4 47,000 5 c) Spy Kids 6 True 7 c) Texas 8 Numtubs 9 a) Lunar Owls 10 Bindi Irwin 11 False. She completed her eighth spacewalk. 12 b) Tiki Tak 13 c) 1990 14 True 15 Radishes

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.





# Quiz

## How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 The main story of the new movie *Dog Man* comes from which book in the series?

2 True or false? Bald eagles have always been the official national bird of the US.

True ☐ False ☐

3 In the book *Inside the Park*, what is the name of the dog that gets trapped in the stadium with Pumpsie?

- a) Campy  
b) Charger  
c) Chompy

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

4 Scientists recently determined that modern humans and Neanderthals interbred how many years ago?

5 Which of these films was recently added to the National Film Registry?

- a) *Inside Out*  
b) *Ratatouille*  
c) *Spy Kids*

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

6 True or false? The Vendée Globe sailing race is held every four years.

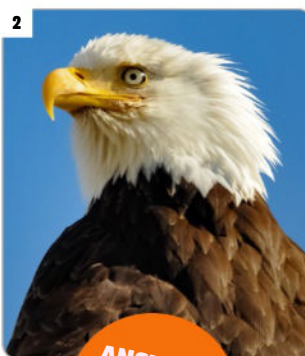
True ☐ False ☐

7 Chili was declared the official dish of which US state in 1977?

- a) Arizona b) New Mexico  
c) Texas

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

8 What are baby numbats called?



9 Which club won the first game played in the new Unrivaled basketball league?

- a) Lunar Owls  
b) Mist  
c) Vinyl

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

10 What is the name of the conservationist who wrote a children's book called *You Are a Wildlife Warrior*?

11 True or false? NASA astronaut Suni Williams recently completed her first career spacewalk.

True ☐ False ☐

12 What is the name of the group of angry masks in the game Donkey Kong Country Returns HD?

- a) Tock Tick  
b) Tiki Tak  
c) Tik Tock

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

13 In what year did the FDA ban the use of Red Dye No. 3 in cosmetics?

- a) 1970  
b) 1980  
c) 1990

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

14 True or false? The world's largest iceberg, A23a, was stuck in one place for more than 30 years.

True ☐ False ☐

15 What vegetable is turned into art at a contest called the Noche de Rábanos in Oaxaca, Mexico?

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